

It's their turn!

Pre-teens need vaccines too!



Why is Arizona requiring that my child receive the meningitis and whooping cough vaccines?

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) is concerned about the health of all residents and wants to make sure your child is protected against serious diseases. The CDC recommends that 11 and 12 year olds receive the MCV4 vaccine to protect against meningococcal disease (meningitis) and the Tdap vaccine to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), diphtheria, and tetanus. Starting in Fall of 2008, students 11 years and older entering 6th grade must be vaccinated with MCV4 and Tdap.

Are these diseases really harmful to my child?

Yes. Meningococcal infection can be very serious, even deadly. The disease can become deadly fast, sometimes in 48 hours or less. Even with antibiotic treatment, adolescents die in about 10% of cases. About 20% of survivors will have long-term disability, such as loss of a limb, deafness, nervous system problems, or brain damage.

Whooping cough (pertussis) causes coughing fits that can be so severe that adolescents can miss school or be unable to participate in sports or other social activities. Parents may also have to miss work in order to take care of a sick child.

I thought my child was already vaccinated against whooping cough (pertussis) . . .

Protection from some childhood vaccines can wear off. The immunity from childhood vaccination against pertussis does not last into the adolescent years. A booster shot will help your child to continue to be protected against pertussis.

What other vaccines are recommended for adolescents?

There are three vaccines recommended for adolescents. Tdap protects against pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria; MCV4 protects against meningococcal disease (meningitis), and the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for girls protects against cervical cancer. Adolescents might also need other vaccinations. Ask your doctor about vaccinations your child may have missed.

Are the vaccines safe?

Yes. The recommended vaccines are safe and effective. Before any vaccine is licensed and made available to the public, it must be extensively studied and the FDA must approve it as safe and effective. These vaccines are also recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Society for Adolescent Medicine.

How much do these vaccines cost?

For families with health insurance, all or most of the cost is usually covered. Children age 18 and younger may be eligible to get the vaccines free through the Vaccines for Children program (VFC) if they are Medicaid eligible, uninsured, American Indian or Alaska Native. Parents can find a VFC provider by contacting their local health department.

For More Information

Please visit www.azdhs.gov/phs/immun, www.nmaus.org or call your local health department.